accidents and removing the stalled vehicles on the stretches which are under Operation and Maintenance contracts.

Port terminal development operation

2558. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to involve global players in the country's port-terminal development operations;

(b) if so, the details of the comprehensive maritime development policy of Government;

(c) whether Government have identified the schemes/projects in major ports proposed to be taken up for development; and

(d) if so, the details of those projects falling in the State of Orissa?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T. R. BAALU): (a) Private sector participation, including foreign direct investment upto 100% under automatic route, is permitted in the ports in India. Some major international port terminal operators are already engaged in port terminal operations in India.

(b) The Comprehensive Policy for the Maritime Sectors (Ports, Merchant Shipping and IWT), which is at draft stage, seeks to combine vision and strategy for the sector through harmonious and coordinated development of country's maritime assets like ports, shipping, inland water transport systems and ship building and ship repair industries. The main points in the draft Policy are as follows:—

(i) Holistic development of maritime transport systems through a coordinated plan and strategies for development of port infrastructure, improvement in shipping, backward integration of the hinterland through rail, road and inland water transport connectivity, augmentation of ship building and ship repair facilities so as to emerge as an internationally competitive nation in this area by 2025.

(ii) Ensure quality service comparable with international benchmarks in Indian port through modernization, improvement in productivity and structural reforms.

(iii) Facilitate transhipment of Indian origin/bound cargo in Indian ports.

(iv) Effect significant increase in Indian Shipping and IWT tonnage through facilitative policy interventions.

(v) Promote coastal shipping and inland water transport through a package of measures including fiscal and financial incentives.

(vi) Strengthen maritime administration and bring about regulatory framework reforms to promote good governance.

(vii) Provide level playing field to Indian stakeholders by providing fiscal regime at par with international norms and by rationalizing domestic levies.

(viii) Provide for state-of-the-art aids to navigation and requisite regulatory framework.

(ix) Encourage ship-building and ship-repair activities to become internationally competitive and emerge as a leading ship-building/ship-repair nation by 2025.

(x) Support ship-breaking and ship-recycling activities without compromising on environmental concerns.

(xi) Stimulate private sector investment including foreign direct investment particularly for rendering services of a commercial nature in the Maritime sector, by providing conducive environment.

(xii) Promote shipping-trade interface by evolving code of conduct for supply chain players such as freight forwarders, shipping agents, multimodal transport operators and other intermediaries.

(xiii) Develop human resources in maritime sector and market them in the context of emerging global shortage of qualified personnel in the sector.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) A total of 28 projects at an estimated cost of Rs. 2402.83 crores at Paradip Port, which is the only major port in Orissa, have been identified for inclusion in the Programme.

Improvement of National Highways in Andhra Pradesh

2559. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of projects seeking financial assistance to improve the National Highways in Andhra Pradesh pending with Government for sanction;

(b) the funds alloted to Andhra Pradesh for the improvement of National Highways during the current year and the details of the projects; and

(c) the present stage of projects and the proposed plan for the implementation of subsequent phases?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIYAPPA): (a) to (c) 16 proposals of Andhra Pradesh Government are pending for consideration under Annual Plan 2005-06 for National Highway stretches entrusted to the State Government. These proposals are at various stages of scrutiny. However, their sanction or otherwise would depend upon the availability of funds and the proposal meeting the technical parameters/ requirements. The unsanctioned projects are likely to be carried over to the subsequent Annual Plans depending upon the *inter se* priority and availability of funds.

For the improvement of the National Highway stretches entrusted to State Government, Rs. 86.23 crore, including Permanent Bridge Fee Funds, have been allocated to the State of Andhra Pradesh during the current year.

Work on Golden Quadrilateral

2560. SHRIMATI S. G. INDIRA: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that 92 per cent of the work on the Golden Quadrilateral would be completed by December, 2005;